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SOVIET REHOUSES 3,000,000

MOSCOU, Thursday.—Over 3,000,000 people of the war-devastated areas have been rehoused in Russia since the end of the war. With 15,000 more cottages due to be completed by the end of this month in addition to the 712,000 already built, nearly all the Russian peasants whose homes were wrecked by the Nazis will celebrate New Year with new homes.—Globe.

FRENCH MOVE FOR PEACE IN INDO-CHINA

French Terms for Viet-Nam Negotiations

Colonial Minister's Bid to Find a Solution

VIET-NAM PRESIDENT READY TO MEET PEACE OVERTURES

FRANCE TO STAND BY SEPTEMBER AGREEMENT

PARIS, Thursday. M. Marius Moutet, the French Minister for Colonies, in a statement made in Saigon published today said that the French Government firmly intended to reach a peaceful agreement in Indo-China.

"A conciliatory solution," he added, "is better than forceful methods which can only entail disorder, ruin and misery."

As soon as the security of French troops was ensured M. Moutet said the French Government would return to the policy defined on September 14 in the Franco-Vietnamese Agreement, because this policy constituted "a step forward towards liberty."

The main object of the September Agreement, M. Moutet explained, was to put an end to all armed operations and hostile discussions in order to reach mutual understanding.

The French Minister stated that the French Government was quite ready to meet any peace overtures and that all Viet-Nam proposals would be carefully examined.

"I would be the biggest winner if I came back to Paris with a peaceful solution," he said. He added however that the situation he had found in Indo-China was very different from the spirit of the September agreement in as much as hostilities "cruelly engaged" were rife and that the safety of the French soldiers and citizens was threatened.

"I consider that my first duty for the time being is to combat this situation," M. Moutet declared.

Another 'Reuter' report says: "That shortly after Dr. Ho Chi Minh, Prime Minister of the Indo-Chinese Republic of Viet-Nam, said today that he would be 'very happy' to have a talk in Hanoi with M. Marius Moutet, the French Colonial Minister, who is now in Indo-China, French military circles announced that M. Moutet had flown to Hanoi from Saigon."

It was not stated, however, whether

ARAB HIGHER COMMITTEE EXPANDED

JERUSALEM, Thursday. The Arab Higher Committee, whose leader is the exiled Mufti of Jerusalem, Al Haj-Amin-el-Husseini, today announced the addition of five new members, three of whom are political exiles in Egypt with the Mufti.

The new members are: Muin Mahdi of Haifa, a lawyer who will direct the Committee's political section, Rafik Tamimi, who will take charge of "Arab national affairs" and three Egypt exiles—Isahak Darwish, the Mufti's nephew, who was with him in Europe during the war years, Sheikh Hassan Abul Saud who was detained at Seychelles Island during the war and Issat Darwish who headed the Arab Defence Committee during the Palestine-Arab rebellion.—Reuter.

A SERIOUS SITUATION IN SUMATRA

LONDON, Thursday. CABLES from Batavia, the 'News Chronicle' correspondent quotes a Dutch Army communiqué for the statement that a serious situation exists in Sumatra where a Dutch patrol crossed the provisional demarcation line near Medan by error on Saturday.

"Minor attacks by Republican irregulars were renewed yesterday and the people of Medan have been ordered to stay at home."

"Although the Dutch Commander apologised for the patrols infringements and announced that disciplinary measures would be taken the Republicans attacked and dropped mortar bombs on a Chinese quarter. A Dutch counter-attack was the result," states the correspondent.—Reuter.

General Aung San Dining with Liaquat on Saturday

GENERAL AUNG SAN, Vice-Chairman of the Burma Government who arrived here this evening, will be given an official dinner party by Pandit Nehru tonight (Friday), says an API report from New Delhi.

The Inter-Asian Relations Conference is giving a tea party in his honour. He is lunching with the Viceroy on Saturday and dining with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the Finance Minister, the same night. During his stay here, he will meet other members of the Interim Government and Field-Marshal Auchinleck.—API.

GEN. CUNNINGHAM FLIES TO LONDON: PALESTINE SITUATION TO BE DISCUSSED IN FULL

JERUSALEM, Thursday. GENERAL Sir Alan Cunningham, the British High Commissioner in Palestine, has left Palestine by air to London for talks with Mr. Arthur Creech-Jones, the Colonial Secretary.

The talks will cover every aspect of the situation in Palestine including the rise in violence as well as preparations for the Palestine Conference due to open in London on January 11, Reuter's diplomatic correspondent wrote.

After Sir Alan had left, the Jewish terrorist organization Irgun Zvai Leumi threatened in a broadcast over their secret radio transmitter that night attacks against British Army transport in Palestine will be resumed.

News of Sir Alan's trip was disclosed officially after another day of excessive search by British troops seeking out terrorists who fogged a British Army officer and three non-commissioned officers in a reprisal for blinding of a young Jew.

The brigade of the Sixth Airborne Division which moved into Tel Aviv yesterday detained 39 Jews suspected of complicity in the fogging on Sunday.

day of Major "Paddy" Brett and three NCO's.

Manahem Beigin, "Commander-in-Chief" of the Jewish terrorist organization Irgun Zvai Leumi, rejected in a broadcast last night an appeal made by the former United States Congressman, Mr. Joseph Clark Baldwin on Saturday to halt operations in Palestine.

"We shall not be able to fulfil your request, Mr. Baldwin," Manahem Beigin declared over the Irgun's secret radio transmitter, "the Voice of Fighting Zion."

"It is impossible for us to wait. Our people need real help and as it is not forthcoming, we have no alternative but to help ourselves."

Mr. Baldwin, who is the Administrative Chairman of the Political Action Committee for Palestine, said in his appeal for a halt in operations: "I know this is a difficult position. Remember my personal assurance to you that I will do everything—in my power to present your point of view and that of other Jewish leaders in Palestine in an effort to expedite action and avoid further bloodshed."—Reuter.

JAVA ARTILLERY OPENS FIRE ON DUTCH

SEQUEL TO VIOLATION OF TRUCE AGREEMENT

BATAVIA, Thursday. INDONESIAN troops have fought an artillery duel with Dutch troops around Medan in Northern Sumatra, an official Dutch Military spokesman said today.

In view of the military situation Dutch troops occupied the telephone exchange which was previously in Indonesian hands.

Indonesians opened fire with heavy artillery late on Monday night and Dutch troops replied silencing the Indonesian artillery after a three-and-a-half-hour battle.

Firing was continued on Tuesday.

Concentrations of Indonesian Republican Peoples' Army were reported outside Medan.

Dutch troops have also occupied Kotamasoem after opposition. One Dutch soldier was killed.

The fighting was the result of violation of the truce agreement reached between the Dutch and Indonesians at Medan on December 27, the spokesman said.—Reuter.

The Indonesian Premier, Sultan Shahriar, said, he had not yet received an official Indonesian report on the Medan fighting. He added that without placing the blame on either side, "the situation has continued to deteriorate for past two months." Shahriar blamed the delay in signing the Cheribon agreement for the unabated mutual distrust which, he said, was making the position of elements favouring a peaceful Indonesian political solution "increasingly difficult."

The Premier said that political leaders on both sides were doing everything possible to avoid "a Viet-Nam type disaster" but emphasised that swift signing of the agreement in its original form was essential to the restoration of goodwill. He said, Indonesians

were prepared to sign at once.

A Dutch spokesman declared that Col. Sitompel, the Indonesian Divisional Commander, had unilaterally repudiated the agreement that the Dutch should enter the city, apparently because Gen. Saeedur Rahman's on December 25 was taken as "a signal to fight". Gen. Saeedur Rahman, the Indonesian Commander-in-Chief, in his speech said that the time had come for Indonesians to show their power because of Dutch action endangering Indonesian sovereignty.—A.P.A. Reuter.

VAN MOOK'S THREAT TO INDONESIANS

BATAVIA, Thursday. IN a vigorous New Year's Day speech the Lieutenant Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, H. P. Van Mook, said yesterday that recent statements of the Indonesian Army's Commander-in-Chief, General Soedirman, can only lead to further fighting.

He also indicated that the Dutch were prepared to adopt a powerful policy towards irresponsible Indonesian elements reported to be endangering the prospects of peace.

"The Indonesian situation has clarified in some ways in recent months, but now it seems that the picture has become more obscure as a consequence of General Soedirman's speeches," Dr. Van Mook said.

If fighting should break out, the Dutch were prepared to take a stern attitude towards the irresponsible Indonesians, Van Mook added.—A.P.A.

STREET BATTLE IN TEL AVIV

JERUSALEM, Thursday. THREE explosions are reported to have occurred in Jerusalem tonight. All British troops guarding civil and military buildings in the city are standing to.

A flying squad of cars of Palestine Police are now investigating the reports. Jewish terrorists attacked the British police and military headquarters at Citrus House in Tel Aviv tonight. Street battle between troops and Jewish gunmen is reported to be going on. Violent gunfire is reverberating throughout the centre of the city. Civilians are scattering to seek shelter.—Reuter.

THIRD TEST CENTRAL FIGURES

MELBOURNE, Thursday: Two men—McCool (Australia) and William Edrich (England)—were the central figures in the second day's play of the third Test when England scored 147 for the loss of Hutton's wicket in reply to Australia's first innings total 365. A vast crowd more than 70,000, saw some splendid cricket as the fortunes of both sides often fluctuated.—Reuter.

(See Back Page)

LEBANESE THANK FRENCH

BEIRUT, Thursday: On the eve of celebrating the complete evacuation of foreign troops from the country, the Lebanese Government thanked the French Government for faithfully and loyally adhering to the Evacuation Agreement.—Globe.

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League Action Committee's Meeting Postponed

It is announced that the meeting of the Committee of Action of the All India Muslim League fixed for January 12, has been postponed for the third week of January. The exact date and place of the meeting will be announced later on.—API.

SIR NICHOLAS BACON DEAD
NORWICH (Norfolk), Thursday: England's Premier Baronet, Sir Nicholas Bacon, who is a descendant of the Essayist Sir Francis Bacon, died yesterday at the age of 89.—Reuter.